

## Wound Care and Sutures

Laparoscopic "key hole" surgery requires small incisions to be made in your abdomen. The incision sites on the abdomen and inside the vaginal vault will be closed with sutures which dissolve on their own. The abdominal sutures will be covered in a waterproof dressing initially and may be supported by a steri-strip. You can take this dressing down 1-2 days post discharge and inspect the site. The wounds should be kept clean and gently patted dry after showering. If you are concerned your wound has signs of infection please see your GP or contact us for further management.

## When to Seek Help

**You should seek advice from your GP or WA Gynae & Surgery if you experience any of the following:**

- ❖ Persistent vaginal bleeding
- ❖ Passing large clots or tissue
- ❖ Offensive smelling vaginal discharge
- ❖ An elevated temperature over 38°C, or chills
- ❖ Persistent and worsening nausea or vomiting
- ❖ Increasing abdominal or back pain not relieved by analgesia
- ❖ Pain, burning or frequency when passing urine
- ❖ Increasing difficulty in emptying your bladder
- ❖ A wound with persistent redness, pain, ooze or increasing swelling around the incision or an enlarging bruise around the incision site

*Please find your post operative appointment details on the Admission page. Should you have any difficulties attending this appointment please call the rooms so we can reschedule.*

**If you have a concern post your procedure:**

**During Business Hours:**

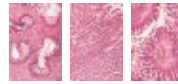
Contact WA Gynae & Surgery - **9388 3495**

**After Hours:** Nurse manager at SJOG Subiaco - **9382 6111**

**Emergency requiring urgent assistance:**

KEMH or your nearest emergency department

**If you are happy to see your GP, then please do so.**



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HOW TO GET WELL

**TOTAL  
LAPAROSCOPIC  
HYSTERECTOMY**

# Admission

Please come to the admission desk of \_\_\_\_\_  
hospital on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ am

A pre-admission nurse will be in contact with you to discuss pre-operative instructions, the following points give you an idea of what to expect during this discussion. Depending on your medical history the anaesthetist may also phone you prior to surgery. The anaesthetist will always see you on the morning of surgery and sometimes will require a consultation a few days prior.

**The anaesthetist for your surgery will be**

Dr \_\_\_\_\_

**AM list — No food or milk products after midnight** (this includes lollies and chewing gum). You may drink water up until 6am the morning of your surgery.

**PM list — You may have a light (non fatty) breakfast before 7am the day of your surgery.** Thereafter you must fast from all food and milk products (this includes lollies and chewing gum). You may continue to drink water freely until 11am.

- ❖ If you are on medication you should continue taking it UNLESS you have been otherwise instructed.
- ❖ Shower on the morning of your operation in a Chlorhexidine Pre-Op Body Wash 4%. Do not use talcum powder. Do not apply make-up, body creams or perfume.
- ❖ Remove all nail polish and jewellery, if possible.
- ❖ Expect a 1-2 night stay in hospital. Please arrange an escort to pick you up at time of discharge.
- ❖ If you are at all concerned about you procedure, or have any queries please do not hesitate to call our rooms.

**Routine follow up appointment**

\_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

**T : (08) 9388-3495**

**reception@wagynaesurgery.com.au**

**secretary@wagynaesurgery.com.au**



## Your Recovery

Your surgeon and their team will have provided you with information prior to your operation about the procedure itself and answered any questions you may have had. Now that you have had your procedure you probably have new questions. The aim of this "Recovery" sheet is to answer those questions.

## Rest

Rest is imperative for a good recovery. You should rest when you get home, and continue to rest for the next few weeks. Avoid standing for long periods of time. Take frequent breaks during the day and rest with your feet up. Laying in later in the morning and retiring earlier to bed are ways to maximize rest time. For a laparoscopic hysterectomy expected recovery time is 2-4 weeks. Everyone is different and these times will vary for individuals. This time frame is key when considering return to work, on average 4-6 weeks is taken off work dependant on an individual's physical work demand.

## Pain Bloating

Cramping and abdominal discomfort, similar to that of period pain are common symptoms post-surgery. You may have been given strong pain medication to continue taking at home. As pain is individual for each patient you can decide if you need to continue with these strong medications or to take regular pain relief such as paracetamol and/or Ibuprofen to cover your pain requirements. A hot pack and resting may help also. Laparoscopic procedures require for your abdomen to be filled with gas. You may have a distended (bloating) abdomen for a few weeks as well as some referred pain most commonly across your shoulders. Pain relief and gentle walking can help to dissipate the excess gas.

## Exercise / Heavy Lifting

You should not lift or pull heavy objects (over 2kgs) for 8 weeks following your operation. Everyday activities such as loading the washing machine, carrying a washing basket, hanging washing on the line, carrying children and vacuuming should all be avoided and delegated to someone else. Strenuous exercise and swimming are to be completely avoided for 8 weeks. Low impact leisurely exercise such as gentle walking for short distances can be introduced slowly. These activity restrictions are important as you don't want to put undue stress on healing tissues and increase the risk of bleeding or infection. If an activity causes you pain don't do it!

## Vaginal Bleeding

Light vaginal spotting can be expected post hysterectomy until the vaginal vault sutures have healed. This may appear red, pink, or brown. You may use sanitary liners. Please do not use tampons! Should you develop heavier bleeding, bleeding that is persistent and does not stop, or any bleeding associated with an increase in pelvic pain or fevers please contact our rooms to discuss as this can be an indication of infection. If you experience heavy bright red bleeding, pass clots, or required to change a sanitary pad more than once per hour, please attend an emergency department.

## Swimming

We recommend that you do not swim soak in a bath or spa for 8 weeks post hysterectomy to minimise the risk of infection.

## Resuming Intimacy

To ensure the vaginal vault heals, it is strongly advised to avoid intercourse and objects inside the vagina for at least 8 weeks post hysterectomy and until after your post operative review. If you experience severe discomfort or bleeding please stop and discuss this with your surgeon.

## Bladder and Bowel Care

Your surgery may have an impact on your bladder and bowel function. Initially your bowels may be sluggish (this usually takes 2-4 days to return to normal) and you may have an indwelling catheter (IDC) draining your urine. The IDC will be removed prior to discharge. Following IDC removal contact our rooms should you have any pain, burning or difficulty when passing urine. To prevent constipation and straining, an over-the-counter stool softener such as 'Movicol' is recommended to maintain regular soft bowel habits. Avoid all stool softener products containing SENNA! It is also important to drink good amounts of water to keep well hydrated. Eating low residue foods (white rice, pasta, fruits, and vegetables) will also support a healthy bowel. Your surgeon will refer you to a Womans Health Physiotherapist to assess and provide advice to improve your pelvic floor health. Please ensure that you are performing your pelvic floor exercises everyday once you have recovered from surgery.

## Driving

Resuming driving will depend on both your recovery and your car insurance coverage. For laparoscopic hysterectomy the recommended time off driving is approximately 2 weeks.